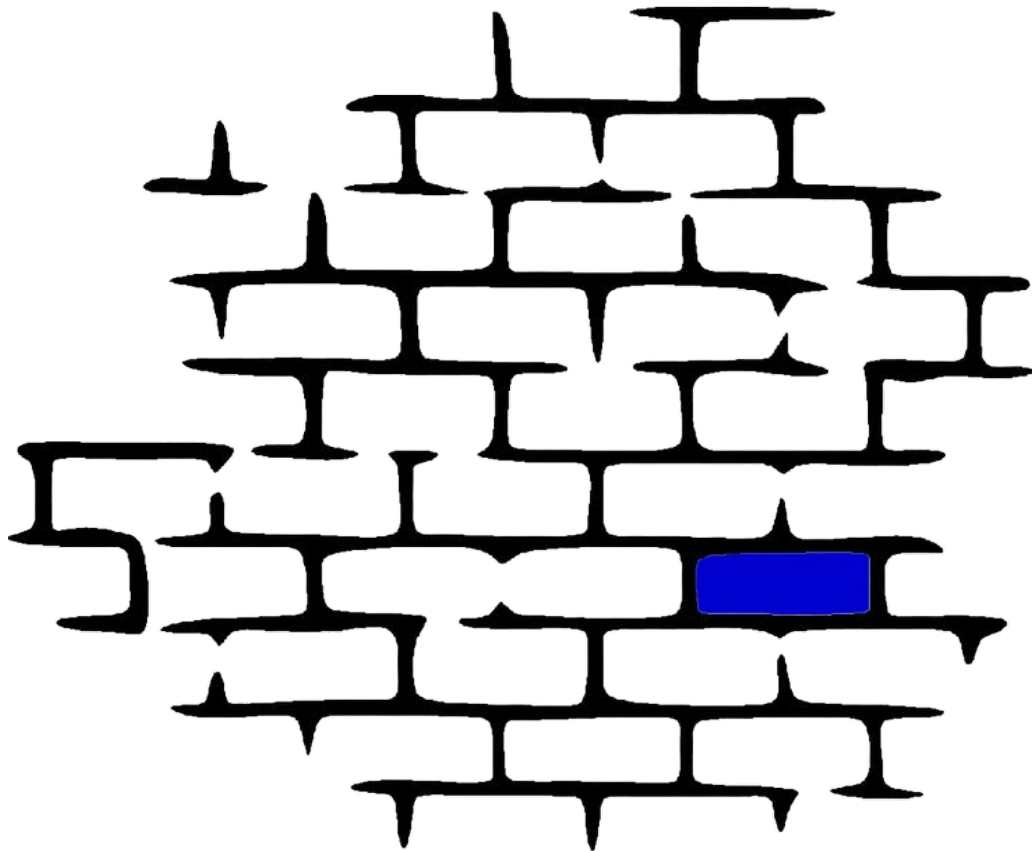


A Blue Brick in the Wall

A Student's Manifesto Against Modern Education

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Basis

I do not blame teachers or administrators for the current state of “education”. I blame all who oblige in this mechanical process without expressing their sincere and most organic thoughts. Those who play the game, those who consciously play the game. You must question your unchosen path and who you have become. To fail to do so is to be responsible for this system, in which you perhaps scrutinize but lack the quality to add depth and meaning to your fleeting thoughts. I have many thoughts, rash and undesirable, of this machine in which I have devoted the majority of my life up to this point. It physically pains me to stay silent. I sacrifice freedom; I cannot speak what is on my mind. Criticism or debate is not an option; I cannot *choose* what I believe. I must oblige and listen; I should most certainly have my otherwise useless and limited time forfeited if I speak up or do anything other than what is instructed. The emotion that compels me to write this is within nearly every peer I know. It is to an extent that teachers, the cogs, ridicule the machine. Yet, those very teachers still oblige, and as I have said, those who oblige, even I, are at fault. I am no better than another, but I am withered. I write this as a plea for every student's sake now and forever, and also a warning. We need change.

Subjectivity

I often wonder what the true purpose of school is. I want to know both truths — the pecuniary original purpose, and the one modern society preaches. For I myself have been obeying for over a decade of my short and unfulfilling life, and still, I have yet to find the purpose. I was once told that the purpose of school is to "learn *how* to learn." But I find that all things extracurricular and fulfilling that I have learned took less than a decade. I choose the unsteady path of realization, I can be a fool and honor my subjective numbers and feel accomplished. I say to myself that I, who possesses no skillset worth mentioning, am better than those who have a lower non-tangible number. A grade is an interpretation of a skill, a mere opinion. To evaluate abstract skills, such as writing, using a criterion is to discourage unique growth. The artificial value placed on grades is supported by a ridiculous social contract: a contract where millions of children are given a perceived limit to their very own lives. As if it is biologically and ethically correct in the advanced society we live in, to give ourselves values and levels of proficiency based on an opinion, and let these values, determined in youth, dictate the outcome of our only life. Fixed from birth to dedicate your youth and conformity to fraudulent figures' opinion, and cherish it as it is my

Lord's word. I must be celebrated by my fellow inmates, and the fruits of my labor include a dishonest occupation to capture my independence and originality forevermore. This is not enlightenment or honest education; this is captivity. I have known brilliant people who chain themselves to a weightless number and drown themselves in our world's fantasy. Neither eternity nor your God will acknowledge this mortal judgment.

Pseudo-Rationality

This artificial world is limited. Supposedly independent adults, most of whom rely on a singular stagnant skill to meet needs, condemn my opinion and, rather than debate, scold me. It is perceived as a distasteful personal attack when I question a mere system's functionality. The reactions I have seen are shocking yet expected. Once your reality has been structured on top of the foundation of school, you can predict that dissecting your foundation may cause your reality to lose integrity and possible meaning. I will systematically counter these illusions, exposing the faults of this system.

It is not natural or beneficial in any aspect to hold yourself accountable to receive, digest, and make do of man-fed information for the daily duration of – in my case, seven hours. You are expected to listen and not lose focus or morale. Breaking up the duration does not prove beneficial. I find that there is no time for your own comprehension, questioning, or original thought. There is no time for your life to develop independently.

In the state of Pennsylvania, you take a math placement test at the age of ten. Your result will decide which level of

class you are put into and project your pre-adult and consequently adult life's success, all at ten years old. You are labeled and separated; you are given a psychological ceiling that limits your belief in yourself. From this moment, your potential is pre-judged and your autonomy curtailed.

The most common assessment of skill in school is a test on how long you can withhold impractical information. This reflects obedience rather than understanding. Students often write formulas or meanings as soon as they receive a test. It is not them to blame; it is the less-than-ideal system that we selfishly submit to. This is not real education; you do not learn, you live in vain. You are taught to appease the test rather than to learn and grow. The overall scores of standardized tests, including SAT, ACT, and state tests, are declining, yet GPAs increase. The standard of education is declining. This system proves itself broken. It is no conspiracy that the reason for standards dropping even on standardized tests is not only to protect the functional image but also, as usual, to protect the money. It wouldn't make sense to pour nearly a trillion dollars into a broken system; however, when the scores reflect "proficiency", funding is reliable. This is corruption, and at some point, the bubble is going to burst.

This fallacious education machine is failing the next generation, who will bear more responsibilities than any before them. Before high school, I never knew that schools

cheat on their own exams, but now, only two years in, I have seen many grade curves and simplified test redesigns. Parents are under the guise of success, while our good grades conceal deep-rooted corruption and the monetization of society's children. Every action, every rule, every standard in schools perpetuates this exploitation.

Strictly enforcing the standard schedule is both morally and scientifically wrong. Many dismiss this important matter, but its consequences are severe. A child's sleep schedule is not childish; it is the most essential substance for the future mind's well-being. It is a sick charade to act blind to the pillaging of this generation's mental health. The hypocrisy of educated ignorance regarding biology has enabled the tumor to flourish – all because the cost of logistic reconfiguration would be too costly for the school, but not you.

It is curious as to how the two most prized subjects were chosen, thus being mathematics and a criteria-driven sense of literature. Crowned jewels of the school but never treated as such. No wonder the consistent shortcomings lead to a life of prejudice.

Education is the nectar of life's flower, but when put in a controlled industrial environment and farmed, it is disingenuous and loses value. What little knowledge you may absorb is futile; the scraps of your term are useless bits

of information that fail to equate to the worth of a day's passionate learning. You are now completely dependent on an artificially valued diploma that certifies you have the same expertise as everyone else. After all, why would you be taught and practice financial literacy, something invaluable to this society, inside a public government-funded school?

I am a product of school, I thrive in the environment and fit the testing mold perfectly, the artificial gap of intelligence was in my favor, but not the majority's. If you are like me and can take advantage of this enterprise, I believe you ought to be determining your self-worth from a truer soil. Do not let the system define what your intelligence is or could be.

Acknowledging the unintentional confirmation biases and the legitimate chance of a stable but unfulfilling life, if you sacrifice, you can find a hard truth that frees you and gives life itself a new meaning. Change is harder than stagnation. Drastic change feels wrong. The truth is that your school taught intelligence is not of lasting or meaningful substance, is limited by a projection, and has been institutionalized. Every hour of the school day proves the system is broken. This system is designed for educating; it is designed for controlling.

Mortality

You only live once, one time. To be brought into this world and placed into a system by the government is a grave injustice. A parent's choice should prevail over a government's compulsion. America's liberty is a facade. America, and its schools alike, echo false freedom throughout the world, yet coerce their own population. We are granted this one life, fragile and fleeting, yet collectively we submit to capitalism's products that enslave us to a dysfunctional system; our temporary lives revolve around an unidentifiable cause; ultimately, the effect is loss of self – we cannot determine for ourselves, your finite time wasted serving the same man-made cause that condemns our only life to be used in vain. School is indoctrination. Men can not, do not, question the reality they are born into. This reality is full of manufactured givens that are valued as truth; empires persistently grow on your lack of critical thought. It is an insult to be rewarded for your cooperation in this system while your mouth is gagged and limbs bound. It is discouraged to use my one life as I wish. I am expected to “mature” and come to “reality,” the false reality of necessary formal employment, which is control. I refuse to submit to this illusion and domestication of spirit; to submit is to feed yourself, but greater, feed the illusion. It is this prevalent

indolence that leads to the current state of common life. Generations are being manipulated five days a week to fulfill this illusion rather than their individual selves. Painfully forfeiting the sublime human spirit to settle for a life of less. I don't wish to judge one man's calling, but it is nauseating to watch, likely, the most beautiful people I will ever know choose prefabricated careers with hesitation and lack of enthusiasm. This is not reality; reality is not what we have known for our whole lives. We have been fed this sickness that ravages the human spirit and cripples meaningful pursuits in return for superfluous jobs. To have a blessing such as life, and selfishly put your head down, accept anonymity, and allow an unscrupulous entity to control your only chance, is a disgrace to life. Schools rob fragile natural identities and create eternal painful existences, yet not hard or meaningful existences. To acknowledge this reality and, against your own interest, accept this shallow reality is a suicide of the human spirit.

Horizon

Humans persist in the self-destructive nature that has created our syndicated world. It is a monotonous cycle that goes by many names, yet at its core, it remains the same. Man has accomplished the biological purpose of life centuries ago, and yet it is a spectacle to see how this world seems to lose individual purpose every passing day. It is a rare struggle in the Western world – food, water, shelter. The fundamentals that structured humankind's daily life are now a given from birth. Without the struggle of necessities, we make our own struggle. Modern-day struggles are complex and entail convoluted thinking that fabricates excessive solutions. Thus, modern-day employment is the answer for so many. But this is a superficial remedy to a far deeper struggle. Perhaps a life's most valuable struggle – purpose. It is necessary to discover your truest calling in this world, and not what society calls you to be. Schools manufacture humans incapable of finding their truest calling as they chase a life-consuming illusion that suppresses the most necessary struggle. To be lost is quintessential to discovering your purpose. To be lost and unaware is dangerous. A destructive product of current and previous states in the constantly developing mind can be illuminated if one is lost, yet cannot ground. You must have

routine and hobbies, even if rudimentary. This is why I believe “mental illness” as society deems it, is all too common in today’s youth, nonetheless attributed to a lack of meaningful use of time and lack of appropriate social interaction; all of which school enables. Schools, even if unintentional, push a child to be lost and unaware, opening doors to unneeded lifelong struggle.

As this world evolves and the idea of anthropocentrism thrives along with capitalist incentive, it is sure to mass-produce greater problems at humanity’s expense. Foolishly, society pays no mind to the causation and only to the resolution of minuscule problems that create further complicated ones. Schools encourage the oversocialization penetrated through children’s minds, systematically oppressing the nature of humans. School’s societal constraints are the new shackles of slavery.

Oversocialization does not benefit most, and a growing minority suffers unceasingly. The politicized reality that children face as a result of every politician leads to the violence and “illness” we desperately capitalize on. I do not propose a utopia, but I do not stand for the constant psychological pain and, in turn, damage my peers silently take as a result of this deprived society’s norms and expectations. Your taxes cause death to the innocent of this country and abroad; blood is on your hands. Our education system educates to the degree of compliance, domestication, rather than enlightenment and critical thought. To be

isolated within this barbed fortitude is hell. This country of freedom crucifies a child who “fails” a class, a child who acts differently, a child who wants to be free, and the public scratches their heads as to why we have mass shootings. It is not the guns; the human behind the gun wasn’t born with such indescribable hate. The putrid society we are enthralled by is responsible for the death of today and tomorrow.

Observations

I am a sophomore in an anonymous school district in the Lehigh Valley. I want to make it clear that I am not better or worse than any other student because of my supposedly “prestigious” grades. I wrote this to give my classmates a voice. I witness their daily stifle and quiet frustration. I want to awaken every student’s dormant mind. I want debate, conversation, and above all – original thought.

I can no longer rot in a classroom while silently aware of the lies of this institution. The nonexistent separation between home life and school life, the violation of rights, and the dehumanizing punishments: my blood boils, and carefully articulated hatred runs through my veins. Without the necessary abolishment of this system, I cannot reasonably see a promising future. Truthfully, we are going to witness an increase in mass shootings, a mental health pandemic, and the eventual decrease in the quality of life for the working class. We let this happen. No diploma can save you from reality. The future does not care how much money or what degree you have – you will have to suffer.

A personal reason I wrote this is that so many – too many – people choose a suicide-inducing career because of the false narrative that you need to make a “good” living. Choose carefully who you listen to: your lousy guidance counselor and brainwashed friends will often perpetuate the same corporate slop of pursuing your “interests” as long as you can afford a “good” living, and therefore put more

money in the bottomless pockets of abusive corporations and false-promise governments. Do not compromise your true passions for a “good” job.

This country’s politics manipulates the public for capitalistic incentives. Every time you vote for left or right, you must acknowledge that you are compromising a portion of your own beliefs. It does not matter who you are or your politics; both sides are in the same sinking boat, yet are too busy bickering to look up and realize the amused puppeteers. Every institution in this country is linked one way or another, and you are the product. Stop buying the same old story and take matters into your own hands. The relentless abuse that average civilians have faced for decades should not be tolerated. You do not need to resort to a politically sensationalized violent spurt, but rather a peaceful abstinence, such as abstaining from paying taxes that go towards injustices against innocent women, children, and even yourself.

Schools produce relentless consumers of mass media, believing they are educated and objectively right, but they and their opposition are being blindly manipulated. Schools have encouraged this country’s self-destructive consumerism, and some may argue, capitalism, to pass the line. In a world where you “cannot” drink rainwater, you must ask yourself: Is this Earth anymore, or a figment of a corporation’s wet dream? We, the people, have tolerated far too much.

I encourage everyone to give life, not school, their attention. Try being unstimulated and bored. Explore artistic or creative hobbies, reconnect with nature, and try to enjoy

the struggle of discovering yourself. Do not focus on school – focus on you, focus on your life. I do acknowledge that some individuals find passion in a standard job, and if that provides their life with a fulfilling purpose, I have nothing but sincere congratulations. But this society is full of appeasers. School's indoctrination conditioned you to appease a teacher, the government, or a job, rather than to find real meaning. Stop settling for less, find your meaning, and start living your life as if it is yours.

Personal Anecdote

An unpolished anecdote: In a previous school, I criticized a procedure that was recently implemented to filter students out of the cafeteria safely. This procedure was redundant, cutting into our very precious class time, and was a bother for everyone involved. And so I said to my

friend that this was dumb. That one word dumb was enough to where, after all my classmates left, I was held back and was given a talking to by the SRO. It wasn't so much talking as talking is when there is an exchange. I was scolded. I was told never to say the word "dumb" again and not to speak of this confrontation to anyone. That is wrong, and so I disobeyed as everyone should.

The Beginning

One life. One chance. Do not surrender it to a ruthless system that profits from your taught obedience and labels it as success. Live *free*; educate yourself in your own desires. Do not let anything or anyone determine your life – find your own meaning. Relentlessly *educate yourself*. Don't settle for distraction or a life worth less than your own. This machine requires your obedience to strip away everyone

else's natural humanistic freedom. The immoral social experiment we mistakenly call an "education system" has failed past, present, and future generations. Men and women are not meant to be stripped of their uniqueness and sent through the same incompatible machine. Instead, allow yourself to become *lost*, fail repeatedly, and rediscover your own meaning of life. Success is not grades or a job that steals your life in the name of "earning" a living; it is the discovery of your own life. Achieving this world's "success" is the truest form of failure. Do not conform to this unscrupulous system that forever distracts you from your true meaning. Shed the life this system made for you. This system must change – and it begins by reclaiming your *only* life.